



# Penny Bernard Schaber

STATE REPRESENTATIVE 57th ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

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## Assembly Democrats Pass Equal Pay Legislation, Advance Broad Agenda for Wisconsin's Workers

Madison— The day after National Equal Pay Day, Rep. Penny Bernard Schaber (D-Appleton) voted today to pass Equal Pay legislation that will strengthen Wisconsin's law and give workers facing pay inequity a path to overcome wage discrimination. The bill was one of many pieces of important legislation the Assembly Democrats passed this week as part of its agenda to support and protect Wisconsin's working men and women.

"As a woman, I am very pleased we passed this long overdue legislation," said Rep. Bernard Schaber. "I have seen discrimination first hand. Women should be paid on the basis of their abilities not their gender."

Pay equity is a growing problem in Wisconsin, particularly for women and older people in the workplace. Recent studies have shown that, on average, Wisconsin women make up to 22% less than their male colleagues, and in these tough economic times age discrimination against workers over 40 is at a record high. The Equal Pay Act (AB 31/SB 20) would help to bridge these unfair wage gaps for workers by preventing discriminatory pay practices by employers. The legislation also grants individuals facing pay equity issues additional legal avenues beyond the Department of Workforce Development's administrative suit process.

April 28<sup>th</sup> was National Equal Pay Day, celebrated each April to raise awareness about the issue of pay inequity in American workplaces. As part of its agenda for Wisconsin Workers, the Assembly Democrats also passed:

- **AB 78/SB 51 – The John Doe Bill:** This bill would provide greater protections for corrections employees from frivolous, costly, and time consuming lawsuits by changing current law to allow judges involved in John Doe cases to use other information provided by law enforcement officials to inform their decision on inmate complaints.
- **AB 102/SB 94 - Licensure of HVAC:** This bill directs the Department of Commerce to set up a system of licensing individuals who work in the fields of heating, ventilating, cooling, plumbing, and refrigeration – careers that are booming because of the recent trend to "green" homes and businesses. The oversight this bill requires will help to ensure that Wisconsin consumers have the information they need to choose fully-trained professionals to install heating and cooling systems.

"I will continue to work with both Republicans and Democrats to ensure we get our economy back on track and move Wisconsin forward," said Rep. Bernard Schaber.

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